

A Brief Look at Where We've Been

Romans Chapters 1-7

CHAPTER 1

Written by Paul as an introduction to Christians in Rome

- Establishes his credentials "I'm an apostle!"
- Reminds them where his authority came from
- His assignment was to the Gentile world
- "...obedience that comes from faith." (Not imposed)
- Reminds us that we are all called to be saints
- Wanted to come to Rome before, but prevented so far

v. 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile."

Why? "For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

God's wrath against mankind

- Verse 20
- Mankind turned to idolatry
- Result of idolatry ⇒ sin (v. 24)
- God punishes us by letting us have control over our own destinies

CHAPTER 2

Changes focus to Jewish Christians -- those who had the Law

You think only the Gentiles sin? Take a look in the mirror

v. 3: "So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment?" (No "get out of jail free" cards)

v. 9-11: No favoritism by God; grace is given to all and all will be judged

v. 28-29: What makes a person a Jew? (Or a child of God?)

CHAPTER 3

God is faithful, even though His people have not been faithful to Him

v. 20: "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law."

Topics we've studied

- What is faith?
- What is wrath?
- What is idolatry?
- What is sin?
- What is repentance?
- About the "C" word
- What is evil?
- What is righteousness?
- What is hope?
- What is grace?
- Obedience
- About baptism
- Slave or servant?
- It's the law!
- Adam, serpents & Satan

If we can't be righteous through the law, how can it happen? ⇒ FAITH!

v. 23: *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*

So, should we stop trying to be good? No! But we should stop boasting about how good we are in comparison to others.

CHAPTER 4

Do you know Abraham?

Abraham was not justified because he was circumcised, but rather because he believed!

- Abram had not been circumcised yet when God declared him righteous
- Abraham was also not under the Law as anytime in his life (Law yet to come)

Grace is not an obligation to be paid to us because of good work we do ⇒ It's a gift!

We are not blood relatives of Abraham, yet he is the father of all who believe

We share in his inheritance through our faith in the one who raised Jesus from the grave

CHAPTER 5

We have peace with God through Jesus

“We rejoice in the hope of the Glory of God.”

However, we also rejoice in our sufferings! (v. 3)

We find grace not in our successes, but in our suffering

(Endurance ⇒ character/integrity ⇒ hope) “And hope does not disappoint us” v. 5

God made His sacrifice “at just the right time” even though we were weak, ungodly sinners

➤ Death entered into the world via Adam's disobedience

➤ The promise of eternal life was given to us via Christ's obedience

v. 17: “For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!”

The Law does not keep us from sinning, but gave the people awareness of sin (making them want to do the sinning)

That's why grace is so important!

CHAPTER 6

Do we then go on sinning so that we can get more grace? (If $A \rightarrow B$, then do more A)

No! In baptism we die to sin and have a new life... being alive to God in Jesus.

Can people who are dead to sin continue to sin?

Slave to sin or slave to righteousness? Must be one or the other. No middle ground.

v. 23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CHAPTER 7

How did it happen that we are no longer under the Law?

An example from marriage:

- When husband dies, the woman is free from her contractual obligations
- The obligations (law) is limited in length -- ends at death of one party

Christ died, so we are free to choose: Do we pick God or sin?

Plus: We died in baptism, so we can serve a new master: the Spirit

v. 8b-10: "For apart from the law, sin was dead. Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death."

Does that mean the law itself is evil? No!

Adam and Eve had received only one commandment -- was that commandment evil?

Sin drives us to do things we don't want to do -- what we know isn't right

v. 24: "What a wretched man I am!"

How can I possibly escape from my wretched condition? Through Jesus Christ our Lord!